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T H E

R U R A L      D I S T R I C T      O F      E L Y

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A N N U A L      R E P O R T

for the year

1952

by

K. S. M A U R I C E - S M I T H,

M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.,

Medical Officer of Health.

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ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF

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HEALTH FOR 1952

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to submit my Annual Report for the year ending 31st December 1952.

1. STATISTICS:

During 1952 the usual statistics have been kept and are available. These are not included in my Report.

2. GENERAL HEALTH SERVICES:

- (a) Ambulances.— Two ambulances are stationed at Ely both being operated by the Isle of Ely County Council. One is for infectious diseases and the other for non-infectious diseases.

The St. John Ambulance at Littleport has also been available throughout the year. This Ambulance works under an agency agreement with the County Council. Members of the Littleport Ambulance and Nursing Divisions man and drive this vehicle. Their efforts are very much appreciated in the District, and their record is an excellent one.

- (b) Nursing and Clinic Arrangements.— These are the same as for previous years. The District Nurses continue to maintain their fine record of service.

(c) Hospitals :

- (i) Tower House Hospital for Chronic Sick
- (ii) The Isolation Hospital
- (iii) The Grange Maternity Home

These hospitals are under the control of the Regional Hospital Board.





### 3. WATER:

- (a) (i) The supply for the District is drawn from two chalk wells at West Row. Water supplies of sufficient quantity and sufficient quality have been maintained during the twelve months under review by the Water Engineer and his Staff.
- (ii) The whole of the rising mains are watched carefully and continually by the Water Engineer.
- (iii) There have been no major breakdowns during the year.
- (b) (i) The Chloramine Plant has been in use continually and has proved satisfactory. The chloramine process permits of the treatment of the water at the source.
- (ii) Four chemical and bacteriological examinations were made during the year, and proved satisfactory.
- (iii) No contamination was found during the year.
- (iv) The water has no plumbo-solvent action.
- (v) With reference to the general supply to houses in the District, the table of figures given in my Report for 1950 approximate very closely to the present position.

### 4. SEWAGE:

- (a) It is a matter for regret that the Rural sewage problems are still outstanding and are still so very pressing, but at the same time influence of the national economic position must unfortunately be appreciated.
- (b) The Littleport Sewage Scheme was completed during October. This scheme covers the south extremity of the town, with the exception of the Greyfields Housing Estate, where private settling tanks have had to be installed on account of difficulties with levels.
- (c) In Sutton, The Brook area continues to be a source of great nuisance, and I am in complete agreement with the Council's decision to press for the installation of sewers, independent of the main scheme in this area.
- (d) There is no doubt, in my mind, that Sutton is still a "blackspot" in the District, and I continue to feel very anxious about it.



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## 5. HOUSING:

### Permanent Housing:

#### Sites:

In hand and not under development at 1.1.1952	3
Acquired during 1952	<u>3</u>
	6
Taken into development during 1952	<u>5</u>
In hand and not under development as at 31.12.1952	<u>1</u>

#### Dwellings:

No. covered by contracts placed - and not commenced or in course of erection - as at 1.1.1952	30
No. covered by contracts placed during 1952	120
	<u>150</u>
No. under construction as at 1.1.1952	48
No. commenced during 1952	<u>114</u>
	<u>162</u>

	<u>Bungalows</u> <u>2-bedrooms</u>	<u>Houses</u> <u>2-bedrooms</u>	<u>Houses</u> <u>3-bedrooms</u>	<u>Total</u>
No. completed during 1952	22	-	26	48
No. under construction as at 31.12.52				
Stage of Completion %				
76 to 99	6	-	16	
51 to 75	-	-	12	
26 to 50	8	-	8	
To 25	<u>6</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>54</u>	
	<u>20</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>90</u>	<u>114</u>
				<u>162</u>



## 5. HOUSING (CONTD.):

### Dwellings:

No. not commenced as at 31.12.52	36
No. let during 1952 to members of agricultural population	10
Total number of permanent houses provided under Housing Acts to 31.12.52.	1150

### Temporary Housing:

Total number of dwellings provided by conversion of ex-service hutting and occupied as at 31.12.52	119
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### Private Housing:

No. of unfinished dwellings licensed or approved as at 1.1.1952	11
No. licensed or approved during 1952	<u>32</u> <u>43</u>
No. of dwellings completed during 1952	23
No. in course of erection as at 31.12.52	12
No. not commenced as at 31.12.52	8 <u>43</u>

## 6. SCHOOLS:

Again, comments appear to be of little value. I have little reason to modify remarks contained in previous Annual Reports.

## 7. MILK:

In previous Reports, I have drawn attention to the value of "heat treatment" of milk. This year two more incidents emphasise these earlier remarks, and to prove yet again the value of efficient "heat treatment."

In May I had to put a "Stop Order" on the milk supply from one herd, on account of brucella abortus (undulant fever) infection having been found in a routine sample. I had to continue the "Stop Order" for just over five weeks before I was satisfied that the milk was safe.





## 7. MILK (CONTD.):

Again, in September, I had to apply a "Stop Order" for twelve days to the milk from a herd, on account of the discovery of tubercular infection in a routine sample. After careful investigation, I found the source of the infection, which was due to milk purchased by the dairyman elsewhere.

Great difficulties can arise in the operation of the regulations when milk is sold which has been purchased from sources external to the herd under question. Dairykeepers should keep this warning in mind.

## 8. INFECTIOUS DISEASE:

(a) 94 notifications of infectious disease were received.

The total of 94 cases is made up as follows :

Whooping Cough	46
Pneumonia	12
Puerperal Pyrexia	1
Scarlet Fever	6
Measles	12
Anterior Poliomyelitis	6
Erysipelas	2
Infective Hepatitis	3
Sonne Dysentry	1
Salmonella Typhi-murium	4
Salmonella Infection Carrier	1
	<hr/>
	94
	<hr/>

(b) During May some anxiety was caused in one village by an atypical scarletinaform rash, associated with a haemolytic streptococcus in the throat. Pathological investigations showed an A.24 type H.S. which, I was informed, was a new type for the district. The Medical Officers (Doctors Fry and Wormald) from the M.R.C. Laboratory, Cambridge, were of the greatest assistance to me, and I am most grateful to them for their help. I arranged for the local school to have throat and nose swabs taken; four carriers of A.24 H.S. were found and dealt with, and I was gratified to find that these measures prevented any major outbreak of Scarlet Fever in the District.



## 8. INFECTIOUS DISEASE (CONTD.):

- (c) During the year I was shocked to discover that, following an outbreak of Salmonella Typhi-murium infection at a General Hospital outside the area, carriers and patients were coming into this area without any notification to me. Following very strong representations by me to the Hospital concerned, I was glad to be assured that adequate steps were taken at once by the Hospital authorities, with the result that no spread of the infection occurred in the District.
- (d) Disinfection of premises etc. is regularly carried out in cases of notifiable disease; also when infection is reported, or requests are received for any special reasons. Clothing and bedding are disinfected at the Isolation Hospital, by arrangement with the East Anglian Hospital Board.
- (e) No case of diphtheria was notified in the District during this year. I cannot stress too strongly the importance and value of the immunisation of children against this disease. Immunisation can always be carried out free of charge by the family medical practitioner, or at the County Council Clinics.
- (f) Tuberculosis. - 12 new cases were notified during the year. After making the necessary adjustments, there are the following numbers on the Register :

### Respiratory

Male 37  
Female 17

### Non-Respiratory

13  
9

Compared with 1951, the figures shew an increase of 3 cases, made up as follows :

### Respiratory

Male 2  
Female 0

### Non-Respiratory

1  
0

## 9. FOOD:

- (a) I am glad to report that practically every shop continues to exhibit the notices requesting the public not to bring dogs into food premises - and I am most grateful for this co-operation on the part of the District's Food traders. The same embargo should, in my opinion, also apply to cats.





9. FOOD (CONTD.):

- (b) Every opportunity is taken of watching conditions under which Ice Cream is sold. I am aware of the care which is taken by the big Manufacturers, but such care is considerably lessened if dirty utensils and containers are used after delivery to retailers.

10. MISCELLANEOUS:

- (a) Rodent Control.— The Sanitary Inspector with the assistance of the Rodent Officer (ordinary English = Rat Catcher) has inspected 550 premises, 430 of these required treatment, and 380 were actually dealt with.
- (b) Moveable Dwellings.— This problem, arising chiefly from the activities of temporary agricultural workers, gypsies, etc., still causes me much anxiety. The legal remedies under the Public Health Act 1936 are very difficult to apply effectively. Farmers generally, I feel, could help to abate this nuisance by seeking the advice and co-operation of the Public Health Department; and without increasing the difficulties of their own aspects of this problem.

During the year the County Council, as Planning Authority, circulated for comment a draft statement of policy with regard to Caravan Sites in the County. The District Council noted with pleasure that this statement contained what it considered were adequate measures in the matter of sanitation, refuse disposal, water etc.

- (c) Factories Act.— Such factories as are in the District are inspected periodically and any necessary action is taken.

11. PERSONAL:

Once again it gives me the greatest pleasure to put on record my grateful thanks to the Clerk, Deputy Clerk, Engineer & Surveyor, Sanitary Inspector and Water Engineer, all of whom are very delightful and helpful colleagues with whom to work; and all of whom give me all the assistance and co-operation they can.

I have the honour to be, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

K. S. MAURICE-SMITH,

Medical Officer of Health,  
Ely Rural District Council.

